

**PROCEEDINGS OF THE BROWN COUNTY
VETERANS' RECOGNITION SUBCOMMITTEE**

Pursuant to Section 19.84, Wis. Stats. a regular meeting of the **Brown County Veterans' Recognition Subcommittee** was held on Tuesday, July 13, 2010, at 5:15 p.m., in Room 201 of the Northern Building, 305 E. Walnut Street, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

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| PRESENT: | Don Bettine, Jim Haskins, John Maino, Duane "Snake" Pierce John Walschinski, Joe Witkowski. |
| EXCUSED: | Jack Krueger, Sherry Steenbock, Kristen Verhaagh. |
| ABSENT: | Troy Ness |
| ALSO PRESENT: | Jerry Polus, Kathy Kocken, David Running, Charles King, Other interested parties. |

**Running Total of Veterans' Certificates: 1138

(Jerry Polus, Veteran's Service Officer, ran this meeting of the Veteran's Recognition SubCommittee in the absence of Jack Krueger – Chair and Sherry Steenbock – Vice Chair.)

1. Call Meeting to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Jerry Polus at 5:15 p.m.

2. Invocation by Jim Haskins.

3. Approve/Modify Agenda:

A MOTION WAS MADE BY BETTINE AND SECONDED BY WALSCHINSKI TO APPROVE. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

4. Approve/Modify Minutes of June 8, 2010.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY HASKINS AND SECONDED BY PIERCE TO APPROVE. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

5. Set County Fair Agenda.

Jerry Polus, Veteran's Service Officer, introduced Kathy Kocken, Brown County Fair Administrative Assistant and Exhibit Coordinator and David Running, President of the Brown County Fair Board. He explained that he had invited them to finalize plans for Veteran's Day at the Brown County Fair.

Polus provided a draft copy of the poster for the event and noted that he, Kocken and Running had decided on a few changes. He informed the committee that he planned to send posters to approximately 30 Veteran's Organizations in the Brown County area and asked committee members for help in distributing the rest. Polus reported that 500 tickets and 50 or 60 posters should be ready on Friday, July 17, 2010.

Kocken and Running suggested that the literature being released by the Veterans' Services Office refer the event refer to it as "Armed Forces Appreciation Day", as this is how the fair's postings would list it. The committee agreed that this would be best.

Polus noted that in previous years veterans had been given a sticker to wear when they turned in their admission ticket at the fair. The committee felt that this was a good idea and should be done again. Kocken shared that there are stickers remaining from the supply ordered the previous year.

The Navy Show Band will be performing for Veteran's Day at the fair from noon to 1 p.m. and again at 3:30 p.m. Ms. Kocken will be contacting them to see if they would be willing to play the national anthem and possibly Taps during the rodeo at 10 p.m. The cost for the band will be \$1700 for which the Veteran's Recognition SubCommittee will be responsible for half. John Maino informed that Mark Skogen of Festival Foods had been interested in sponsoring this amount. Kocken added that she could send some paperwork and it was decided that she would be in contact with Maino regarding this.

David Running reported that as part of the military protocol for the Navy Show Band, there cannot be anything behind the band as they are performing that lists sponsors. He noted that this information can be posted to the side and elsewhere. Polus suggested that the master of ceremonies mention the sponsors.

Maino inquired if monies from the 'Veteran's Ride' event hosted by Pearly Gates Bar & Grill could be acquired if the Festival sponsorship fell through. Duane 'Snake' Pierce said that it could be looked into. Maino suggested that the Desert Veteran's of Wisconsin also be contacted regarding this.

Polus informed the committee that the Veteran's Services Office and the Aging and Disability Resource Center would be selling tickets for Veteran's Day at the Brown County Fair.

Running asked if the posters would be placed anywhere in Wisconsin or only in Brown County. Polus answered that any veterans are welcome; however only those from Brown County would be granted free admission. Running reported that at the fair they do not specify; they provide this for any recognized military personnel or veterans, but they do not see this as being an issue. Polus answered that this would be fine.

The tent for this event will be located between the exhibit building and the bathrooms and the tent and stage will be the same size as they had been previously. The full tent is 20 feet by 60 feet with the stage being 16 feet by 20 feet of the size. Running informed that any equipment needed should be brought in through the south gate.

Maino suggested that as a backdrop for the band the committee use an American Flag that had been loaned to Heritage Hill for a Vietnam War event. He stated that he would look into borrowing this.

Kocken notified the committee that from 2:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. there would be a dance group utilizing the stage. She also requested that Polus provide a poster for the fair office.

It was questioned if there was a plan in the event of rain during the fair. Running noted that in the case of lightening there would be a delay, and that if there was a significant amount of rain the event may be moved to the show ring or one of the barns.

Polus reported that for door prizes there would be t-shirts, mugs and bumper stickers. Maino will be looking into supplying additional prizes.

Bettine thanked Kocken and Running for their presence at the meeting. Running responded that being a veteran himself, he appreciated the subcommittee's efforts in the community and the fair would do whatever they could to support the event. Kocken added that veterans that come for the event are welcome to stay for the rest of the fair that day.

Polus reported that he had attended a performance in Lake Geneva of a band called 'Hot Brass'. The group is based out of Scott Air Force Base in St. Claire County, Illinois. He had spoken with the band and the producer and was given a copy of their CD. It had been brought to his attention that this group performs at no cost and he spoke with them regarding playing for Veteran's Day at the Fair for 2011.

Polus requested that the subcommittee place this as an agenda topic for the August meeting so that it could be moved forward with by September. Kocken suggested that for 2011 if there is a Packer game the day of the fair they could share whatever band they use to cut part of the cost. Bettine commented that if the committee has a band locked in earlier for next year they could begin publicizing it earlier. Haskins will be researching Hot Brass and reporting on it in the August meeting.

The design of the shirt was briefly discussed. Pierce inquired about the sizes of the shirts ordered for the event. Polus stated that they had ordered large, extra large, and 2XL. He remarked that since they had shirts left over from previous years in medium, they ordered the larger sizes.

Polus reported that a master of ceremonies for the event at the fair needed to be chosen. He inquired as to whether the committee had decided if Maino or Chairman Jack Krueger would be taking this position. A final decision has not been made at this time.

Polus noted that usually the event begins with a welcome by the master of ceremonies followed by a posting of colors. He mentioned that last year this was done by a Navy group and he would like to look into having them again this year. Polus will be contacting subcommittee member Troy Ness in regards setting this up.

Polus went on to say that after the posting of colors the band would perform and that following the performance, County Executive Tom Hinz would say a few words. He remarked that previously there hadn't been a speaker other than the master of ceremonies and Hinz. The recommendation for this year was that these, along with the band performance, would be sufficient.

Polus outlined the draft agenda for Veteran's Day at the Brown County Fair:

1. Welcome by Master of Ceremonies (Krueger or Maino)
2. Posting of Colors
3. Remarks from Tom Hinz, County Executive
4. Navy Show Band Performance
5. Drawing for Door Prizes
6. Retiring of Colors

Kocken remarked that previously the band performance had begun with some patriotic songs and inquired as to what the committee would like for this year. It was decided that it would be appropriate for them to begin with the national anthem and continue with other patriotic music.

Polus inquired of Maino as to whether they would be able to come on his morning radio show on 101.1 WIXX to talk about Veterans' Day at the Brown County Fair. Maino agreed and Polus indicated that he would like to do this early in the week to give people a chance to come to the Veterans' Service Office to acquire tickets. Maino volunteered to announce information starting two or three weeks prior to the event.

Bettine suggested putting information regarding the event in the Green Bay Sun publication. Witkowski mentioned that Sherry Steenbock, Vice Chair, had taken care of publicity in previous years and has contacts for this. Pierce volunteered to contact the Ashwaubenon paper.

6. Report from CVSO Jerry Polus (If available)
a) Report from Brown County Fair (If available)

Polus reported that the Wisconsin State Fair in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, will be offering free admission to veterans and military personnel on Sunday, August 15, 2010. Tickets for this are available through the Veteran's Services Office. Veteran or military personnel status must be verified and logged for those requesting tickets.

He also noted that he had received updated information regarding the Veteran's Home in King, Wisconsin. This is available for review upon request in the Veterans' Services Office.

Polus remarked that the United Patriotic Society had held its meeting on Monday, July 12, 2010 and had discussed various things including the budget for the Veterans' Services Office. He briefly explained the budget process for 2011 to the subcommittee. He shared that one of his ideas for cutting budget costs included reducing the amount funded for a speaker and lunch program offered monthly at the ADRC.

7. Feasibility of Sponsors for Regular Scheduled Veteran Media Information Program.
Tabled.

8. Report from Committee Members Present (Bettine, Haskins, Maino, Pierce, Walschinski & Witkowski).

Pierce reported that there had been an excellent turnout for the Veteran's Ride event hosted by Pearly Gates Bar & Grill on Saturday, July 10, 2010. He estimated that there had been about 30 hot rods and about 500 motorcycles. He informed the committee that they had paid tribute to 16 Korean War Veterans before the ride and that there had been a flyover. Last year about \$52,000 was raised and Pierce guessed that this amount had been surpassed.

Pierce also shared that chapter 4 of Rolling Thunder will be doing a ride August 28, 2010 at the American Legion Post. He will have more information on this for the August meeting.

Charles King reported that he had been invited by Polus to attend the meeting. He has been in the area about 35 years but had not been actively involved with any veterans' society during that time and would like to get more involved.

Haskins reported that he was disappointed to see that the Brown County Board had not taken action on supporting funding for LZ Lambeau. He referenced a story from the Green Bay Press Gazette. Haskins remarked that he had found it appalling that the board would not assist with this.

Witkowski reported that his neighbor had spent hours collecting and recycling scraps and donated the proceeds to veterans of Afghanistan and Iraq. He noted that certain businesses had saved the scraps specifically for his neighbor.

(At this time Haskins was excused from the meeting)

Walschinski referenced a newspaper clipping from 1998 regarding a bill signed by Governor Tommy Thompson to cover 100% of tuition expenses for Army and National Guard Veterans. He inquired as

to whether this was still in place. Polus answered that in 2005 the Wisconsin GI Bill was passed and that veterans that had been residents of Wisconsin at the time they entered the service, had served 90 days war time or 2 years peace time, and were honorably discharged were eligible to have the government pay for 128 college credits – or 8 semesters- from any State University or Technical College. He specified that this was a lifetime benefit. The bill had initially been passed as a 50% waiver of expenses but was changed to 100% in 2007. There are no income specifications, delimitating dates or level of education received requirements.

Maino shared that he had been contacted by the mother of a soldier from Ashwaubenon who is currently deployed to Afghanistan. She had requested that his platoon be sent a freezer to keep their water cold. He shared that it had not been possible to do this, but one of his listeners had suggested providing Styrofoam coolers and chemical ice packs to cool the water bottles. Maino reported that 1000 ice packs had been donated by Green Bay Home Medical Supply and a gentleman from a company in Manawa, WI had donated 2000 packets of drink mix. In addition to this, Green Bay Rebuilders donated \$500 for shipping. He noted that the Platoon had loved the gift.

Maino briefly discussed that he had learned from his trips overseas to military bases the differing needs of the soldiers based where they are stationed. He explained that while the amenities may be great in some places, there are many areas where things – such as the temperature of the drinking water provided – are overlooked. He noted the importance of identifying the real needs as this varies greatly. He stated that his goal going forward is to help the smaller units in the front lines as much as possible.

Maino reported that a member of the Green Bay Police department had contacted him regarding a member of their force that had been deployed for a third time. This left his wife at home with two small children and after a recent rain storm they found out that their roof was damaged and leaking. The officer that had contacted Maino informed him that they would be doing all the labor to repair the roof but needed help with supplies. H.J. Martin volunteered to provide all of the materials needed. Over \$3000 in supplies were donated.

Polus remarked that he has been contacted by groups wishing to fundraise to benefit the troops and inquired as to what was the best point of contact for this. Maino reiterated the importance of making sure that what is donated is specifically what the troops need and volunteered to be a contact for Polus to refer those wishing to donate to.

Bettine inquired about how shipping costs for these supplies are covered. Maino shared that this is provided for through his fundraising. He referenced a recent golf event at which he had done a raffle to raise funds.

Polus mentioned that he had been notified by a friend that Green Bay Country Club would be sponsoring a special fundraiser in October to benefit veterans. Maino noted that this is an annual event and that it is a reduced rate of \$62 for a veteran to play a round of golf and lunch is provided. This is open to all veterans. Jerry from Miller Marketing handles this event.

Polus noted that there are many people that want to fundraise but question where they should send the proceeds. He went on to say that when he receives inquiries of this nature he suggests that donors give this to a local veterans' group such as the DAV Transportation Program. This way they know that the monies will help veterans in the community.

Bettine commented to Maino that his VFW post would be able to donate funds for shipping for his next project. Maino mentioned that Doug from Green Bay Rebuilders had donated \$500 for shipping and through his Hometown Vets Foundation the final amount collected came to about \$750.

Bettine reported that in June there had been another Old Glory Honor Flight and more had been scheduled. Polus noted that there would be a flight out of Oshkosh on July 29, 2010. Pierce shared that he has a friend that is in charge of another flight and they had been getting many donations. Polus commented that when he checked a couple of weeks prior, there were 400 veterans on the waiting list to participate in the flights.

Walschinski inquired as to how the veterans get on the list. Polus stated that there are applications available through the Veterans' Services Office which are forwarded on to Appleton. They are hoping to take two more flights out of Appleton this year in late summer or early fall. Walschinski wondered about an age requirement for the flights. Polus answered that attendees must be World War II veterans. During this trip, veterans visit the National WWII Memorial in Washington D.C., the Korean War Memorial Wall, Arlington National Cemetery, the Iwo Jima Memorial and tour the Capital.

Bettine reported that in the past the Old Glory Honor Flights had taken one guardian per veteran. This has now been changed to one guardian per two veterans, to accommodate more vets. It was commented that each flight costs \$80,000 to \$100,000. Maino inquired as to where funds for this are found. Polus responded that this is received via fundraisers, donations and corporate sponsorship. He also mentioned that Bettine's VFW post had donated \$1000 to send two of the Veterans' Services staff as guardians on a flight.

The honor flights began out of Milwaukee and that at least three have been done from Appleton. Old Glory Honor Flights is a national program and has five hubs in Wisconsin which include: Milwaukee, Appleton, La Crosse, Wausau and Madison. Pierce commented that he had first learned of the program while attending a Rolling Thunder convention in Washington D.C. He recalled that he had spoken with a representative from North Dakota who indicated that they had been doing these flights out of his state for a couple of years.

9. Such Other Matters as Authorized by Law. None

Adjourn.

A MOTION WAS MADE BY WITKOWSKI AND SECONDED BY PIERCE TO ADJOURN AT 6:30 P.M. Vote taken. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Respectfully submitted,

Anna R. Meert
Recording Secretary